

I am on the Committee of Energy and Commerce, but because of the restrictions of time for this very important bill, I appreciate him giving me time off the Small Business Committee's timeline.

Mr. Chairman, I come to the floor of the House to actually educate Members about some stuff that is in this bill of which they may not be aware. I had an amendment in subcommittee and full committee, and the again yesterday in the Rules Committee that was not made in order. But this amendment deals with the timeline that is going to outlaw the incandescent bulb in this country by 2012. That means, for the current time, you will be using one of these for your light bulbs at home, a compact fluorescent bulb. Perhaps a good idea. They last a long time, they consume less energy; but, Mr. Chairman, they also contain mercury, about 5 milligrams per light bulb.

What is the problem with that? The problem with that is these light bulbs can break. And if they do, what does the Environmental Protection Agency recommend? It recommends you open the window and leave the room for 5 minutes. It recommends that you double-bag your vacuum cleaner bag to pick up all the parts you can without vacuuming, and when you do vacuum put the vacuum cleaner bag in a double plastic bag and send it only to a landfill that accepts mercury. A pretty onerous burden to put upon the taxpayers of the United States.

But the real concern that I have is that we have locations in this country where we have vulnerable populations that are difficult to move: a nursery in a hospital, a daycare center, a nursing home with nonambulatory patients. If you break a compact fluorescent bulb in one of those locations, you are in for big trouble. You have got to move 20 children who are in a nursery before 15 minutes time is up? Most nurseries that I worked in, in hospitals, don't even have a window to open. So how are you going to comply with those EPA guidelines?

The fact of the matter is, my amendment would have had language that said: no nursery, hospital, nursing home is compelled to use a compact fluorescent bulb where the population might be vulnerable if there were the escape of mercury out into the environment.

Unfortunately, the House Speaker, the House leadership did not want that amendment made in order. We now all have these in our offices over in the Longworth Building. I know I found two. I wasn't told that they were being put in the office.

People need to know, they need to be aware that there are very specific guidelines that deal with the breaks of these bulbs, and it is important that they not be compelled to be used in nurseries or with vulnerable populations.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as we have remaining to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. PASITOR). The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 2 minutes.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Small business is the future of America. One of the greatest threats to small business in this country is energy prices, the transportation of their goods and the heating of their factories and the use of clean green natural gas in the manufacturing process. It is 55 percent of the chemical business; it is 45 percent of the polymers and plastics business. They use it as an ingredient; they use it as a fuel. It is 70 percent of nitrogen fertilizer. And one-half of our corn is going to be grown this year with fertilizer from foreign countries because natural gas prices in America are the highest in the world.

The natural gas supply in this country is in crisis. Twelve years ago, we opened it up for an unlimited amount of producing electricity. Now 20-some percent of our electricity is made with natural gas. But we refuse as a country, we refuse as a Congress to open up the Outer Continental Shelf where we have an abundant supply.

How many countries do what we do? There is no one in the world that doesn't produce energy, both gas and oil, on their Outer Continental Shelf. We all talk about Brazil's energy independence. Yes, ethanol was a piece; but they opened up their Outer Continental Shelf.

There has never been a gas well that polluted a beach. There has never been a gas well that polluted anything. Clean green natural gas should be a part of this bill; one-third of the CO₂, no NO_x, no SO_x. It is a clean energy. And as a country, we refuse to use it. How blind can we be?

It is interesting in this bill, we talked about carbon in the last segment. The other two carbon free, we are doing nothing with hydro, we are doing nothing with nuclear, carbon free. I am for all these renewables, but they are a fraction. Twelve hundredths of 1 percent of our energy is wind; and if we double it, we are now 24/100ths of 1 percent.

Folks, I am for all of those, but clean green natural gas is our bridge to get to those. Open it up.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume in discussion of this bill.

I rise in support of the bill and to discuss title VI, the Carbon Neutral Government Act. This title would make our government the world leader in addressing global warming, and it would make government operations dramatically more energy efficient.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform passed this act on

a bipartisan voice vote. To make a difference on global warming, we must be bold and realistic at the same time.

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The Carbon Neutral Government Act strikes this balance. It sets the ambitious goals that we know are necessary to avoid dangerous global warming. Scientists say we need to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050. This legislation asks the Federal Government to lead the way by reducing emissions to meet annual targets and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

The Act also has energy efficiency measures to help agencies achieve these goals, drive technology, and save taxpayers dollars. It requires government vehicles to be low-greenhouse-gas-emitting vehicles. It sets ambitious but achievable goals to increase the energy efficiency of Federal buildings, and it strengthens the requirement for agencies to procure energy efficient products.

With this Act, the government will use its leadership and its purchasing power to promote a more vibrant and cleaner economy.

I urge support for the legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 3221, a 786-page energy bill introduced by the Speaker this week, contains a major restructuring of our Nation's energy policies. I come to the floor today to talk about the specific title of the bill, title VI, which promotes energy efficiency by our Federal Government. That is the jurisdiction which our Government Reform Committee wrote.

Title VI of H.R. 3221 is known as the Carbon Neutral Government Act. It was marked up by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee as H.R. 2635 in June. After exhaustive discussions and negotiations with Chairman WAXMAN and his able staff, the committee approved the legislation by a voice vote. The committee put in a lot of work, and I very much appreciate the chairman's efforts to reach out and compromise with us.

The provisions in the Carbon Neutral Government title represent a bold effort to put the Federal Government in the forefront and in a leadership position with regard to mitigating the buildup of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere.

I agree with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle that the Federal Government must be proactive and take an aggressive leadership role in mitigating the harmful effects of climate change. To that end, the legislation would establish ambitious goals for the government's use of renewable fuels, energy efficient automobiles, and energy-efficient buildings, "green" buildings.

More specifically, this legislation would mandate that the Federal Government's greenhouse gas emissions be